

Magazine Issue

# The University Echo

Vol. LXXI

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No. 19



*Results of Second Annual*

**Poetry, Short Story and Photography Contest**



## From The Editors

In its second year, The Echo Poetry, Prose and Photography Contest received a total of 98 entries from university students with an interest in either creative writing or photography. The contest was open to all students of the university and offered first, second, and third place cash prizes in each of the three areas of competition.

We thank the three judges who consented to lend their time and talent to the task of selecting winners for this second annual contest. Dr. Paul Ramsey, poet-in-residence, judged the 64 poems submitted. Prof. Arlie Herron, associate professor of English and instructor in creative writing, chose the winning short stories from the 13 prose entries. George Cress, chairman of the art department, evaluated the 21 entries in the photography competition.

Grateful appreciation is also extended to the Student Council of the university for its generous allotment of 90 dollars which was offered as prize money for the contest winners.

The Echo established this contest last year in the absence of a regular campus literary publication to provide an outlet for students who have a bent for creative endeavor. It is the opinion of The Echo that the results of this contest are visible, substantial proof that the students of the University of Chattanooga can produce and sustain a regular literary magazine which would justify publication. We hope this valuable and essential organ for the creative talents of the university students will soon be formally established as another regular campus publication.

### POETRY

*First Place*

ADORATION III

Dan Howard

*Second Place*

IN MEMORY OF THE LAND

Ted E. Howard

*Third Place*

THE LAST FOUR HOUSES

Jack Turner

### SHORT STORY

*First Place*

GEORGE B. MILLER, U.S.A.

Mac McCoin

*Second Place*

THE CLOWN

Corky Garner

*Third Place*

THE MEETING PLACE

Dan Howard

### PHOTOGRAPHY

*First Place*

T. Fred Miller

*Second Place*

T. Fred Miller

*Third Place*

Lester Reardon

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Susan Ann Hixson

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## The Last Four Houses

By Jack Turner

*The last four houses at the edge of the gutted field  
Stand forcefully in their ragged prominence against  
the bloody sky. The workers in their virile yellow  
steel protection hats pack up around the iron mon-  
sters of the field called "caterpillar" and "bull-  
dozer" and "roadscraper." The workers leave the  
gutted field under the bloody sky.*

*The last four houses at the edge of the gutted field  
Stand forcefully in their ragged prominence against  
the lemon sky. The workers in their virile yellow  
steel protection hats return carrying black boxes  
with soggy sandwiches and smiling telling virile jokes  
and smoking virile cigars. The workers become parts  
of the monsters and grind into the morning breeze.*

*And on the porches of the ragged houses  
Lay the forgotten baby's rattles, toys,  
Blowing in the lemon-colored dawn now.*

*Back and forth  
Back and forth  
The rattles  
Of the toys  
And the moaning  
Of the ragged  
Skeletons  
Of homes in the  
Lemon-colored dawn.*

*Progress brings its monsters and its yellow-hatted  
men.*

*Progress with its army marches on in the lemon-  
colored dawn.*

*The last four houses at the edge of the gutted field  
Stand forcefully in their ragged prominence against  
the smoke-scarred clouds.*

*The soldiers in their muddy green steel protection  
hats cower behind the iron monsters of the field  
called "cannon" and "tank" and "half-track." The  
soldiers curse in the gutted field under the smoke-  
scarred clouds.*

*The last four houses at the edge of the gutted field  
Stand forcefully in their ragged prominence against  
the red battle glow.*

*The soldiers in their muddy green steel protection  
hats sleep among the iron monsters and murky*

*shell-holes and awful corpses of their buddies and  
corpses of their enemies. The soldiers wake and  
move on in the loud night.*

*And on the porches of the ragged houses  
Lay the forgotten baby's rattles, toys,  
Among the molding ration cans of forgotten soldiers,  
Blowing in the wind of explosions in the loud night.*

*Back and forth  
Back and forth  
The rattles  
Of the toys  
And the clatter  
Of the molding  
Ration cans  
Of dead men in the  
Flashing loud night.*

*Progress brings its monsters and its green-helmet men.  
Progress with its army marches on in the loud flashing  
night.*

*Yes, come, mighty Progress with your monsters and  
your men.*

*Try to smash the toys of babies and the homes of men.  
Try to gut every field and level all the homes of men.  
You are worshipped by many and you are feared  
by all.*

*Yes, come, mighty Progress with your monsters and  
your men.*

*Try to knock down the moon and chart down every  
star.*

*Try to make the sun a baseball and the earth a billiard  
ball.*

*You are worshipped by many and you are feared  
by all.*

*O' let us  
Paint our stars  
With wonder  
And let us  
Kill our cares  
With faith—  
Faith in grass  
Faith in trees  
Faith in the  
Toys of babies.*





*By T. Fred Miller*

**- LSD -**

*By Ted Howard*

The clock on my wrist  
The reloc  
The reloj  
Tics  
And tocks.  
One side and to the other  
I stroll  
And time,  
Jamming the click  
Against my wrist.  
The noise jumps back  
And I jump up,  
Swinging my arm in timed  
Unis  
On.  
Whip, whip, whee,  
Like Rome and  
Its legions on a  
SPREE.

Belly rolls, belly rolls  
Fat, juicy, almost like  
Gumptous jelly rolls  
(Far from a clock  
And its reloc)  
Ha! Ha! You thought I forgot!



## Suburban Hacienda

By Ted Howard

*Here, walled round  
Like a cube among thorns  
Your stuccoed crevices  
Echo a strange tongue.*

*Like a pillar of salt  
Your walls are frosted.  
Your roof is twisted  
—The tiles are looking back.*

*Your sanctity  
Is violated  
Only by light and day,  
By wind and dust.*

*Inside, isolated vines  
Climb unnoticed  
Where stairs ascend  
And drains-pout.*

*All elements combine  
While lightning and water  
Bathes your windows  
Contorted with wet, hungry faces.*

*Then as if to suck you in  
The bilious space behind  
Contracts and grins  
Perhaps  
Perhaps pulling on the wind.*

## Third Place Photography

By

Lester Reardon







*Honorable Mention . . . By T. Fred Miller*



# Adoration

## I

Loose flowing hair like wisping grass-blades  
As the chain of endless thought within you  
Beauty of life—quivering life so near the  
taught-stretched skin of your body.

The gentleness of your voice and touch  
At odds and yet in time with your spirit  
Your oaks—strength of spirit—frightened in  
some parts of life and yet with courage.

Illumination spreads from your presence,  
You constantly labor to relieve the shadows,  
Yours is a soft lightning that seldom  
wounds—but flashes with stark brightness.

## II

Soft brown hair, damp and willow-limbed  
Yielding to my touch yet springing back  
With only the barest hint of impression to show I was  
there.

Ambiguous eyes reveal nothing or everything  
A secret is required to fathom the mirror  
She dissolves in herself at moments beyond prediction  
and judgment.

Heat and cold flow through sculptured courses  
A medium but for a wonderful few  
Welcome life by shattering expansions of needing and  
giving.

Symbols erupt with smooth regularity  
Others with knife-edges outside the pattern  
Cleaving dullness from light tried on dark-green fields.

## III

### First Place

### Poetry

Liquid strength flows with solidity and grace  
Bouquet of musk, power of oil  
Grace of deer fleeting through sheets  
Of mist in always green forests of  
Brick and steel and odorous engines  
and yellowing bookpages  
and warmth

Windows clouded by superimposed  
Shadows and images exuding one  
Small glowing dissolved into  
Clarity for the bearer of the torch  
Amber turned crystal revealing all  
Bareness with terrifying wonder  
Gentle fire grows steadily

**By**

**Dan Howard**





Second Place Photography . . .

By T. Fred Miller



# George B. Miller, U.S.A.

## First Place Prose

The tempo was soft like the night, giving the cheap bar an uptown, almost classical atmosphere. The floor was dirty and the corners were so full of dust that they looked curved instead of square. A middle-aged woman sat and played with the ashtray, rubbing her fingers around the inside of its mouth. It was a square ashtray and slid a few inches each time she came to a corner. The woman was cheap. Her perfume too strong and three bar-stools on each side of her were empty. The bar was crowded.

A single piano played against the murmur of the crowd, impervious to their lack of interest. The pianist, a young man in the late June of life, paid no more attention to his audience than they paid to him. He was perspiring heavily and wore a pair of dark rimmed glasses that slid down his nose. They focused his vision onto a narrow margin of the keyboard. Somehow he seemed out of place; his mannerisms had an almost classic dignity; his periodic pauses for emphasis and his head nodding at just the right moment made the man a part of the music rather than a simple interpreter. Yet, he did not distinguish himself to the point of obscuring the song.

Perhaps he was just here for a one-night stand trying to work his way up, or perhaps he didn't think he could play any worse than he did. The crowd was obviously bent toward the latter opinion as they continued their monotoned recital.

George B. Miller sat and stared into the bottomless world of an empty glass and waited for the next drink. Raising his head he saw a reflection in the bar mirror—his face looking curiously unreal like an image distorted through a foggy window. He wondered why bars never cleaned their mirrors, especially around the corners.

The bartender fixed Miller another drink, mixing it like a housepainter and wiping the stirring rod on his apron. Miller said thanks and the bartender gave him a dirty look.

George B. Miller was drunk; he was drunk because he had a right to be. He had been in Chicago on business, had made a good deal and this was his reward. It was perfectly acceptable for a business man to get occasionally high. This was his release from the tension and strain of business. Just how the hell he had ended up in a place like this he couldn't remember.

The pianist was getting tired and changed his posture to a lax position, but was not humbled. He was tired like an Olympic athlete, exhausted, unable to walk, yet bursting with pride.

The music gave Miller a surge of confidence as its tempo stirred his sensation of accomplishment. He listened with an almost magnetic attraction and began to thump his fingers on the runway of the bar. His expression became almost religiously solemn. Each note of the music was equated with a throb from his heart until he became almost hypnotized. A sweat began to bead upon his brow and the cuffs of his shirt were becoming soiled by their continuous rubbing on the bar. Entering an impassioned empathy with the artist, sharing the same emotion, he forgot the world. It wasn't like Miller, but no one here knew him anyway.

The music stopped. There was a ring where his glass had set on the stained mahogany. In, and all around it, lay each note embossed in a maze of fingerprints.

The small crowd continued with their lethargic monotone—Miller was silent. He felt isolated; his confidence turned to fear; his fear became anger. He stood up and walked to the corner of the room, running his hand along the rail of the bar. He stopped, standing in front of the piano and dropped his glass. It shattered, obliterating all other sound and a shudder of silence came over the room. The crowd stared, paying attention to the pianist for the first time; the pianist and Miller looked at each other, staring point blank with searching eyes. Miller paused and gave the greatest impromptu accolade of any drunk in Chicago, "Sir, you are a great musician, an artist with a gift that places you far above the complacent mediocrity of this room. I admire you. If I were God I would play the piano."

The pianist's eyes had never left those of Miller. He said nothing; it wasn't necessary. He turned back to the piano, straightened his posture, lifted his head a little and began to play. . . .

Miller walked across the barroom floor to the door; he didn't stagger as before; he didn't drop his head; he just walked—like a man.

It was a drab Sunday when Miller got home. His wife picked him up at the train station and gave him her usual dry kiss on the cheek. It had been a long weekend and he was glad to be in the car on the way home. It was raining and the streets glistened with a thin film of oil. Lights on on-coming cars were distorted in every direction. The rain was a mist, the lingering whisper of a dying storm, and tiny droplets duplicated each image before the car.

Miller sat and looked out the window. He thought about being drunk and how it dulls some senses and makes others seem more alive. It was difficult to decide whether to be proud or ashamed of what he had done. Miller looked at his wife and wanted to tell her. When it came to double talk he was an expert. He said nothing.

One supermarket still remained open and Miller's wife wanted to stop. Naturally, Miller had to push the cart as she darted about picking up packages, remarking about the price, and then putting them back only to pick up another. The Sunday-night shoppers, like Miller, with their Sunday morning faces, wandered aimlessly. They were a special crowd, trying to get that last breath of life out of the dying weekend.

Miller thought about the people in the bar and watched the people in the store. There was the same dull murmur as in the bar, but this time there was no pianist. This time he was on his own. He wanted to be more than ordinary. He was frustrated. He had no talent to distinguish himself by. There was nothing to defend. He was one of the crowd and knew it. He was past forty—too old to change.

It was on the way home that Miller distinguished himself. He laughed to himself and his wife asked, "What are you thinking about, George?" He replied, "Oh nothing really, except how I got stoned and made an ass out of myself in some dumpy little bar in Chicago." His wife gave an expression of distaste and drove on.

**By Mac McCoin**







## ***Keepers***

Howling, the gathering, Rowling dark  
affronts my eyes with vacuity  
That I, begetting myself by describing,  
see for a barren plowing under of the park,  
preserve of self, gamesome fleeing keepers  
Of those that, not being there, were lost,  
And my loss following, resulting or not,  
They were real in loss I should have  
Prodded out of possibility—but always, for that  
Qualifying nominal possibility which only  
denies the exclusion it is and, damning me,  
Shall, from never fleeing, always be.

## ***Oblivion***

I pursued haunchy oblivion down, descending,  
The soothing, looming hallways that I lived in  
Inhabited only, not knowing, liquoring  
My deliberateness into shapelessness coolly riven  
with whirling, debilitating wheels gathering  
Rather than my forcing, pursuing sound,  
with no way or cause, no direction furthering  
But downing the gulping sounds I found,  
Dreamily hiding their losing forceless formings,  
The answers to my sworn-out definings rounded  
with sensually striving gasping undelivering,  
sleep. And dreaming so I swirlingly fled,  
Escaping the moment, only to roll myself in living.

***By Felix Miller***

## ***Images***

Images of my most mad heart  
Tearing through my silent brain  
with brained echoes the sad sobbing  
of my ebbing moments lost  
in mazy death the wildering  
search to continue for that  
only my images capture, unknowing.

## **First Place Photography**

***T. Fred Miller***





*Honorable Mention Photography . . .*

*By Winborn Gregory*



# The Clown

Pushing back the flap, Jay entered into darkness. The light bulb eluded his hand until he finally caught the suspending cord, and then he turned the knob. A faint glow spread over the corner of the tent, leaving shadows to lengthen and diminish with the swaying cord. Jay sat down.

Reaching over the mirror in front of him, Jay screwed the light bulb into the socket, and closed his eyes against the brightness. He sat there with his eyes closed, and thought. Thought of the agony he would go through—the agony, the frustration, the humiliation he would have to endure, as he had always done, as he would always do, day after day after day after . . . Wearily, as if he had no strength in him, he reached for the cold cream. It bit his skin as he rubbed it onto every inch of his face, over his eyelids, in his ears, and under his neck. The greasy feeling once more overtook him, and he began to suffocate; he grabbed the paper towels and wiped his face clean. And sat there, staring himself in the face.

Junk walked in. He and Jay had shared this tent for about six months now, and he couldn't tolerate Jay any more than anyone else could—he just acted like it. Junk thought he was crazy—so did the rest of the joeys. Crazy as a loon, they'd say. Why, when him and that donkey'd ride around the ring, he'd 'bout cry 'cause people laughed. Imagine! Cryin' 'cause people laughed at a clown! Why . . .

"Junk."

"Yeah, man."

"Have you any greasepaint?"

"Some. Use this."

"Thanks."

"Sure."

Silence.

"Junk."

"Yeah, man."

"Have you ever thought about people?"

Here we go again. Lor', why does he always ask that question? I'm asking the Ringmaster next week for a new tent. Wiping the cold cream off his face, Junk said, "Ya always wonder about people, Jay. Ya wonder what makes 'em tick, ya wonder what makes 'em stop tickin', all sorts of things."

"You know I've got the answer, Junk. I've really got the answer. Listen, Junk, don't turn away again."

"Listen, pal, I've got to concentrate on my make-up. I know you've got the answer, I know I'm busy right now. Your paint's uneven."

"I know. Listen, Junk, I . . ."

He stopped. Junk didn't ask him to finish. Junk never asked him to finish. He knew Junk would listen if he had the time, but . . . and he knew Junk got kidded about sharing the same tent, too. People just didn't understand him. They never even tried. Always laughing at him, they were always laughing at him, never giving him a chance. Never. But he would have his chance tonight. He had decided days ago that tonight was his last under the Big Top. Never again would the Ringmaster bully him into staying. He was leaving tonight! The thought made him excited, and Junk was immediately aware of it.

"Whatcha thinkin' 'bout, Jay?"

"About people, Junk, I . . ."

"Aw, c'mon, man, you oughta know by now . . ."

"I'm serious, Junk. I've been thinking about people, and how they act, and how I'm sick of the way people around here act, and how I'm getting out."

"How you're what?"

"That's right, I'm getting out tonight, after I ride. I'll find another circus somewhere where people listen to what other people say. Where no one laughs at you because you dare to think, or because you wear a brown, pointed beard, or because you ride a donkey. Or because you . . ."

He'll go on raving for a few minutes more, Junk decided. Leaving tonight, huh? Wonder how much of a prime spot I could get in the ring if I told the Ringmaster that? This could give me the chance I've been waiting for.

" . . . and besides, given a chance, I could make people understand, I could make them listen. You aren't listening again."

"Hmmm?"

"I said—never mind."

Junk chuckled to himself. That's one way to get him to shut up. Make him think you're not listening to him. It kills him.

Jay put down the stick of greasepaint. It just kills me, he thought, when people don't listen. There's as much wrong with this circus—and there are so many people who need to hear what I have to say. But they never did listen. And this nightmare will go on and on if I don't get out. I'll circle that mob of hyenas forever if I don't get out tonight. I know I'll never have another chance.

"C'mon, clown. It's time to make the people forget yesterday—time to make them forget yesterday even happened."

"Wait a minute, Junk. I've still got to circle my eyes."

"I'm goin' on out." No sense waiting any longer than I have to. Not with this loon. "Ya got five minutes, clown, 'fore the joeys go out. Snap it up."

"I'll be there. I've just got a few more strokes to . . ." He's already gone. People are always running away from what I say, it seems. Always. And I get so tired of it. So very tired.

Jay put down his lining pencil and stared into the mirror at the made-up face. The over-all effect was, he decided, very good. At least he'd always looked the part. People noticed that. But they'd always seemed to try and ignore what he looked like. Funny. Funny, funny, funny. One last check in the mirror, and Jay got up, walked over to the robe, took it off the hanger, and put it on. Before he went out, he unscrewed the light bulb in the mirror, and waited a moment to let his eyes adjust, to let the red and green spots go away. Then he reached up to the bulb on the cord and turned the knob. Jay was again in total darkness.

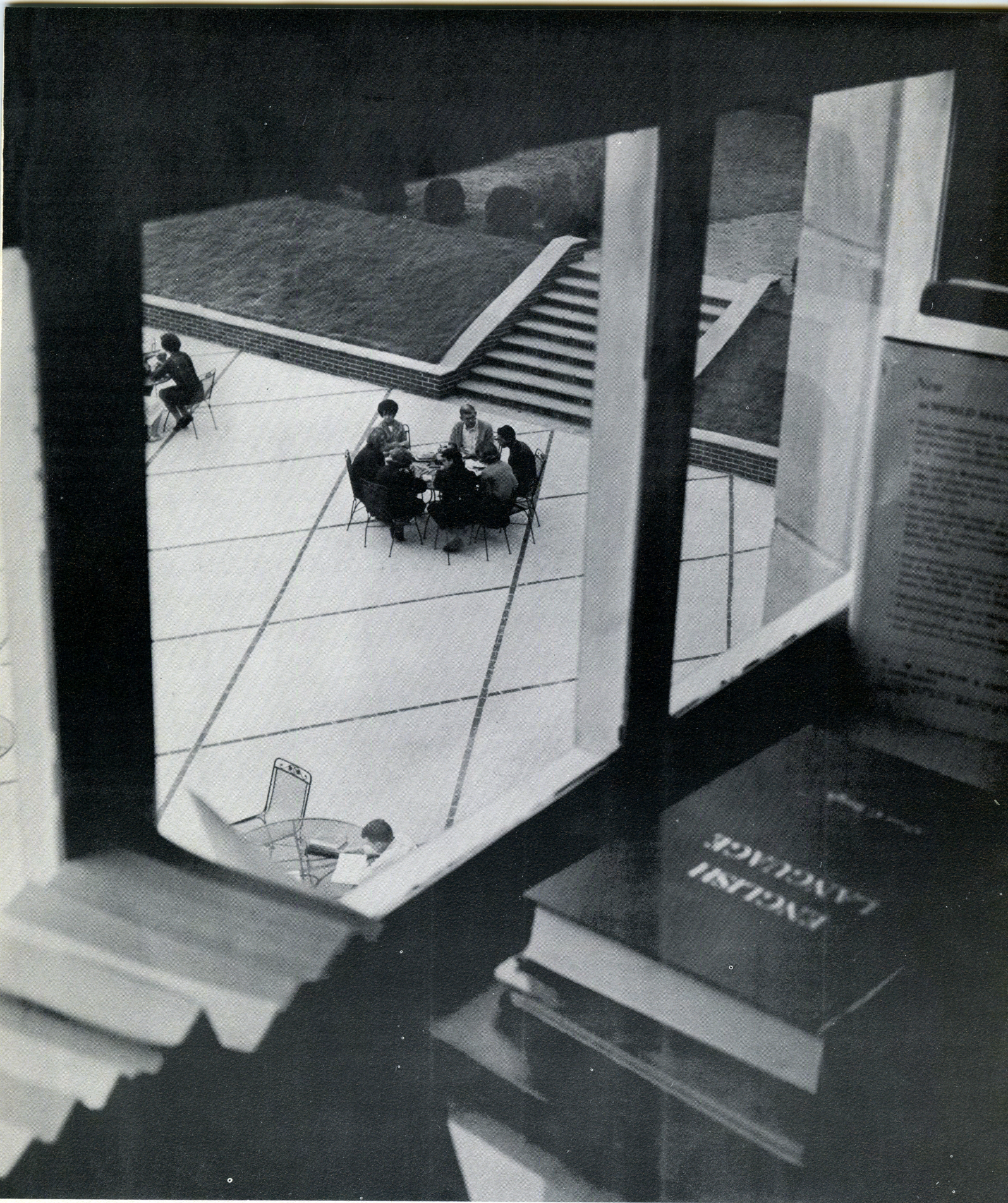
He walked out.

Outside the Big Top, all was stillness.

Inside the Big Top, all was confusion. The small, one-ring circus was preparing to throw the show into its nightly climax. Lights of different colors were circling the people who looked at the acrobats, the middle-aged acrobats who did stunts for middle-aged acrobats; they looked at a woman who dangled a cigarette from her mouth as she rode an old, gray-colored horse around the ring; they watched a magician on the outside of the ring as he tried to pull a rabbit out of his hat, and succeeded only in knocking over the stand, allowing the rabbit to escape. He reeled after the animal, trying to catch it—he was obviously drunk. The people also watched the Ringmaster as he cracked his whip at the dusty air and bellowed from his elevated platform that people should

*Continued on Following Page*





*By Bob Lanza*



watch this, or that, or the other—but not for long, for they would realize all too easy that the acts were no good. That, then, was the Ringmaster's job: to keep their attention at a constant shift. And the people shifted their attention at every suggestion, for they did not want to let themselves realize that the acts were false and that they were part of the game.

All the time the spotlights were moving around the ring, catching the magician, catching the Ringmaster, catching the acrobats, and then shifting into the crowd to take their attention off the ring. The lights were bright, and always moving—constantly moving—and the eyes of the crowd were constantly moving, too.

Then came the clowns. They came running, walking, crawling, riding, striding into the ring; like ants whose nest had been stirred, they overtook the show. The crowd gladly paid attention, hoping. The performing horse, the magician, the acrobats, all were glad to get away. Even the Ringmaster knew the crowd could be left alone for a few precious minutes, and, as attention was diverted away from him, he reached over the stand and grabbed his whiskey bottle.

The clowns were all colors, shapes, and sizes, and all had their one joke that their entire performance was based on. The crowd screeched with laughter . . . too much laughter . . . at the slightest action that was made. The clown show was becoming frenzied, confusing. Over in the corner of the mob, two clowns were disrobing. They began making love, while the other clowns ignored them and carried on their various acts, trying to make people forget yesterday, trying to do or make or say something funny. And into this madness, came Jay.

He rode from the ring entrance slowly, dreading every step the donkey took, dreading the first moment he would be noticed. Dreading the agony, the frustration, the humiliation. But telling himself that this was his last night under the Tent. How it would be somewhere else, he couldn't tell, he could only guess, but he was . . .

"Hey, Marge. Look! Over there! Look, LOOK!"

He had been seen. And now for it, he thought.

He rode the donkey side-saddle, his red robe covering him in folds. One by one the people were turning to stare, and as they stared, a look of wonderment turned to one of realization, and they began to laugh. One by one, they began to laugh and jeer, some began flinging catcalls, and a big, burly man with a bottle of beer in his hand stood up and called to Jay.

"Hey, you! You, clown—you riding the donkey! Look at me. Look at me! Looook at meeeeeee!!!"

When Jay did look, the big burly man gave Jay a big, toothy grin—and shot him a bird.

At this point, the Ringmaster began again.

"I see you've noticed, good friends, our remarkable clown that rides the donkey. Yes, sir, ladies an' gents, this clown is very funny. Vee-rry funny, yessir. Everything he does will tickle your funnybone."

Jay looked straight ahead, as he always did, trying not to listen to the crowd or to the Ringmaster, and trying very hard to show he wasn't even noticing them. He always did it that way, for it helped him to go on.

"Yes, ladies an' gents, everything he does is funny. Watch him, ladies, you, too, men—watch the tears roll down his cheeks when you laugh. Watch him cry real tears, yessir, real ones. Watch, as he tries to get away tonight, yes, very funny."

Jay stiffened! He knows! He . . . Junk! Junk told! He was the only other one that knew! He actually told! I could've . . .

"Look closely, my friends, at this clown who tries to run. C'mon, clown, run for the people. Show 'em how funny a clown can be!"

The Ringmaster no longer was speaking to the crowd. Now he spoke directly and jeeringly to Jay, but, still using his announcer's voice, he pretended to speak to the crowd.

Jay now was afraid. He hadn't expected this, and he

wasn't sure at all what to do. The Ringmaster could be harsh sometimes, and Jay never meant for him to find out.

"Ungrateful people, clowns. Ladies, Gents, I ask you, how can a person be like that? Don't you think he'd like it here? No! He'd rather be a clown somewhere else. He'd rather be someplace away from here. Yessir! RUN, clown. Go on, run!!!"

Jay was beginning to shake. He might get violent, Jay thought. He'd known the Ringmaster to do that before. Jay wasn't sure how to act. For the first time, Jay made a visible movement. He turned his head and looked at the Ringmaster. His eyes faltered, and the Ringmaster laughed shortly. Jay looked back in front of him.

"Welcome back, clown. Remember us? Remember all this? This is what you were going to run away from tonight. You were going to run away from us!"

As the donkey began his turn beneath the Ringmaster's platform, Jay started to look at the Ringmaster again. Had he looked sooner, he would have seen the Ringmaster bend over and pick up his whip. As it was, Jay looked around and saw the whip snapping toward him. The crowd realized what was happening, and, as the whip's tassel lashed across Jay's face, a startled hush fell on the crowd. Jay collapsed across the donkey's neck. Both stunned and startled, he grabbed at the donkey, trying to catch something, anything, that would stop him from falling, but it was useless, and he fell into the dirt and sawdust. The crowd immediately began to laugh, to cheer, to roar with delight. Jay raised his head from where he lay, and looked through his tears at the Ringmaster. He opened his mouth as if to say something, and stopped himself. It was useless. The crowd was frenzied, and the Ringmaster was laughing loud and hard.

"Run, clown! Get up and run right outta here! Go on, run! RUN!"

While the crowd screamed with merriment, the donkey leaned its head toward Jay and licked the slash on Jay's cheek where the blood was oozing. Jay never moved.

Back in the tent, Jay sat down, and this time he did not, or could not, put on the bright light. The other small, weak one gave off a faint glow from its corner, and that was the only thing that kept the tent from being completely dark. It wasn't actually possible to see anything clearly, but Jay knew everything was in its place, and he wasn't worried. Junk had already come and gone, taking his things with him. Jay winced at the thought of their argument as he fingered the long red mark on his cheek.

He felt weak. The whip, the fall, and the argument had taken all the strength he had. His knees were even shaking when he had come into the tent. They had just about given 'way twice when he had run back to the tent after the Ringmaster had . . . well, after that episode. The worst thing about it, though, was, Jay had realized, that the Ringmaster was right. How could somebody be like that, he had said. And he was so right. How could he have been even considering leaving, Jay wondered? Harsh as he was, the Ringmaster had been right. Jay took his robe off and lay it over the back of his chair. Funny how, even when he had fallen to the ground, the robe hadn't gotten the least bit dirty. Jay turned back to the mirror. You just can't turn away from everything and slip into the night, so to speak. That would be the coward's way out. Well, now he understood, anyway. He'd just have to wait a while before actually leaving, that's all. He could leave some other time. And, now that Junk had moved out, perhaps he wouldn't be laughed at by the others. Perhaps. At least there wouldn't be anyone to tell how he talked to himself, or how he acted. So things might not be so bad after all. He could stay a little longer, he thought. It wouldn't be very hard to leave some other time. Not any more. He was sure of that.

Just then, the little light that hung above him, the one that had always been burning, the one that was soft, yet sure, flickered once, and went out—all by itself.



## The Past

She is gone.

Our love was sorrow  
Compiled by hatred.

She was a child of the past  
Rocked by dreams of  
The Golden Flower.  
She took her trip  
To the starlit world,  
The land of desires  
And no dreams cold lying there.

She could say,  
I thought without reception;  
Collapsed words  
Passed my lips;  
I gazed unseen.  
Now I am  
Where I should have been,  
Lulled by the arms of the ocean.

—Ted Howard

## Sonnet

*When night's dark shadow creeps toward distant hill  
And golden glows transform to faded brown,  
My love will call me to his side until  
The thrush flies high against the sun's bold crown.*

*A candle now shines dimly near the hearth  
Resisting fuller flames within the fire.  
A flaming, waxy shape—she knows her worth—  
Her shadows flutter on till we retire.*

*Now moonlight sends forth swift, elysian beams  
To guide a lover to his distant home,  
And to another lover moonlight seems  
To brighten paths wherever she may roam.*

*On through the trees the moon forever streaks  
And meets the sun at dawn on foreign peaks.*

—Susan Ann Hixson

## Anguish

*Oh weary one, don't bow your head and weep.  
Come closer; let me rock my dear to sleep.  
If only you would lay your head at rest  
Upon this glowing ember in my breast,  
You'd find in dreams a silent gratitude  
For giving me your heart and soul to soothe.*

*Should in the night you wake and find me gone,  
Remember that it's to my home I've flown—  
Plucking lacy petals from your flowers—  
Dreaming of countless kisses through the hours.  
And as the morning brushes 'gainst my door,  
I'll sing to you, dear one, when night is o'er.*

—Susan Ann Hixson



## The Meeting Place

By Dan Howard

David closed the valve on the alcohol tank, then climbed down the ladder and checked the vat.

"That's it for today," he thought, walking quickly to the locker room where he shucked the white coverall. Drops of sweat still coursed down his body, even in the cold room. He pulled on jeans, shirt, sneakers, and coat in quick order, walked to the front gate and punched the time clock. It was 5:30 on a cold Friday afternoon.

He sat in the corner of the warm, crowded beer hall, aware of his odor. The tall glass of beer had tasted good after the hellish day in the heat and fumes of the plant. He watched the people about him, making notations from time to time in pencil on a paper napkin.

Frank came in alone at seven. He made his way to the table and said 'hello' to David as he took off his heavy topcoat. He sat down and ordered a beer. "It is indeed an auspicious occasion when two old and hearty seekers of life and truth are joined once more in so pleasant an atmosphere after so long a separation!" Frank said. They both laughed.

"Frank, I'm sorry that we couldn't have talked longer last night, but when one has a job . . ."

"And such a horrid one. Can't you find something else? Office work or something?"

"Nobody pays much for clerks or typists. I can make more money at what I'm doing and I need every penny of it for school."

"Couldn't you get some sort of job with the school?"

"I can't afford to. They pay even less than anyone else," David said. "Things will be better next fall when I get that scholarship."

"I'm glad that you decided to go into teaching, David. I can remember that 10 years ago neither of us would have touched teaching with a 10-foot pole."

David leaned back and stretched, then spoke, "Yeah, seems almost funny, the way we felt about it then. And here you are already teaching and me well on the way."

"Of course, we've both changed in a lot of ways. We used to have some pretty silly ideas, couple of big idealists."

"Some of our ideas weren't so bad. Remember that crock of wine we made?"

"Gag . . . You call that a good idea?" Frank laughed into his beer, blowing suds all over the table. "I damn near died of that wretched stuff." They laughed together. "'scuse me, aged one. Gotta make the trip. Order another pitcher will you?" David walked to the back of the room to a door marked with a bull's head and entered. Frank thought about their relationship, wondering how much he and David had in common after all these years. David returned, taking care to avoid the tables in his path.

"What's with the suit, aged one? You didn't even own one when we were friends in high school."

"I've had to make a few concessions. Few colleges want professors wearing jeans and I see no purpose in putting myself at a disadvantage in that way."

"Sure doesn't sound like the old Frank," said David, smirking.

"Nor is it the old Frank. I've learned a great deal about getting what you want since we went to school together. Some things are important, some aren't, and some are in the middle."

"I suppose you're right. How long are you going to be here this time?"

"I must be in Chicago Tuesday for a meeting, then back to Cornell on Friday."

"Your visits become shorter and less frequent Frank. Wish we could spend more time together like we used to. We don't write much either for some reason."

"It's those abominable chronicles you send me. You used to send me your efforts in poetry and tell me your ideas. Those letters you wrote while you were on that tanker were great. What's happened?"

"I don't know. Not enough time I guess." David took a cigarette from his crumpled pack, then offered Frank one. "I have the smokes if you have a light," he said. Frank lit both cigarettes.

"I forgot to order some more beer. Shall we have another pitcher?"

"I'm kinda tired and full. Let's just order a couple of glasses." He called the waitress and ordered. "Remember those caving trips we used to make. That was fun. I haven't been since the last time we went. Let's see, that was almost six years ago." The waitress brought the beer. Frank paid for both of them.

"Thanks for the beer," David said. He drank deeply. Frank had not spoken for some time. "What's the matter, aged one? Can't you talk?"

"I was just thinking about some of the things we used to do and how much fun they were. Remember those pseudo-philosophic discussions we used to have? God. We were ignorant, hadn't read a thing."

"Somehow I liked that confusion better than the present one," David said musingly. "It was a lot of fun."

Frank finished his beer, then pushed back from the table. "I hate to break this up David, but I'm still very tired from the trip."

"Come on now. I remember when you had no difficulty staying up all night talking and could make all your classes next day. You getting old or something?"

"It's not age. I've just learned that headaches hurt and cause me to be very short-tempered. Besides, I have to visit my parents tomorrow, and you know what a strain that's going to be." Frank was both sleepy and bored. The meeting had disappointed him.

"Well, be that way. Could we get together again before you leave?"

"I don't know. I have several things that I really must do in the next few days. Call me Sunday afternoon. Perhaps we can arrange a meeting." Both of the men donned their coats. They went out together, then said their goodnights in the parking lot.



## Second Place Poetry . . .

### *In Memory of The Land*

This is my forest,  
These my woods, my trees,  
And with every chip of bark  
Ivory drums beat their tap.  
Just as the dark dark descends  
And the earth plummets,  
So this vast expanse  
Yawns and stretches and stands.  
In violent winds and blackened storms  
The trees each criss-cross  
In the image of far-off lancers running.  
Like froth, the leaves and needles  
Fling through the air as foam.  
And in answer to the carnage,  
Pink worms arch their backs  
And clap their hands.

### *Conclusion*

Is it enough for eyes to meet,  
for lips to say,  
for hearts to leap?  
Eyes may move and jerk away,  
but fluid black sparkles in the depths  
and flows across the space.  
Words could be uttered and lost,  
but they are not forgotten.  
Love can join and split,  
can feel and be felt,  
can ache in the middle of the stomach,  
and also hurt at the stroke of hands  
or the touch of fingertips.

### *The Friend*

The sea and I are one  
As we watch you stand  
And lounge upon the rocks.  
Your quizzical look  
Takes in the sand and water  
At a single glance.  
All blue wraps about you  
And green is the companion  
Reflected in your eyes.  
In your presence is a purpose  
And locked in your heart,  
A secret as vague as the wind,  
As distinct as the surf.

The sea and I are one  
And the water has taken my soul.  
As you chill to destiny on the shore,  
I too upon the tops of waves.  
Hold still, wait there,  
—I can almost reach you  
—And yet, I cannot.  
The sea and I are one;  
I must recede or evaporate;  
You stand ready to plunge. . . .

My feet are the ocean floor  
My arms the tentacles of waves  
My clothes the edge of shores.  
You stand on the rock  
Ready to meet a stranger.  
We could be carnal, you and I.  
You have seen outside  
But not within.  
What is this sense of danger?  
The secrets I have not been told?

The sea and I are one  
And should be loved.  
Bare your heart to the sun and wind.  
Stand upon the tallest rock  
And plunge head-long  
Where all peace abides,  
Cold and waiting for your touch.

*By Ted Howard*



***By T. Fred Miller***





